1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

291 occurrence. I was, however, told that, in olden days they were in general
[171] use among the men. Fringed leather belts of the same kind as the one here shown, are still common among the Lengua in the eastern Chaco.[1] Belts and girdles are fastened round the waist by means of a thin leather strap, passed through, and tied to, two holes at one end of the belt. The two free ends of the strap are threaded through two corresponding holes in the other end of the belt (see fig. 31); are tightened up as required, and tied. In the same way the Choroti fasten their fringe-less leather belts (fig. 171), which are usually made of white oxhide, and serve to secure mantles and skirts round the waist (see fig. 30: the man farthest to the left). The Choroti also wear broad, fringe-less belts of oxhide as a protection for the stomach from arrow shots.[2]

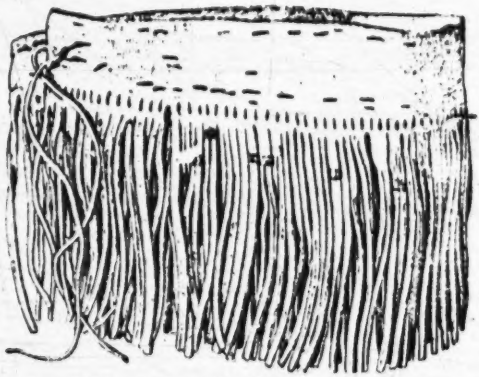

Fig. 31. Fringed leather belt. Mountings of tinplate decorating some of the fringes. Choroti. Gran Chaco, Bolivia. ⅓. Rik:m. 03. 3. 8.

Very common garments are large woollen mantles, which the men either wrap round the waist (figs. 17, 30, the two men on either flank), or drape over the shoulders (fig.
[231] 32). The Choroti women weave these mantles of the wool from the
286 flocks of sheep that the tribe owns in the interior of the Chaco. The
291 mantles are usually in two colours, and woven with groups of stripes. I have reproduced, in fig. 33, a corner of a Choroti man's mantle, the size of the mantle being 204 by 183 cm. The fabric, so-called rep, consists of two-thread, tightly spun yarn of a greyish white (the natural colour of the wool) and reddish brown; the warp is rounded, so that the weaving is selvedged all round. The woof is red. The ground colour of the mantle is brownish red, and there are six groups of greyish white stripes running with the length of the mantle. Each group of stripes consists of one broad, greyish white stripe, with two thinner stripes of

[1] Grubb (1).

[2] Cf. Nordenskiöld (13), plate 13.

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6
Toba SI12

tive fashion, and, according to Nordenskiöld and Karsten, such agriculture as the Choroti engage in, is still on a very inconsiderable scale. Nowadays, however, these Indians cultivate — although not to any great extent — the following plants, viz.: pumpkins, cucumbers, water melons, maize, beans, manioc, sweet potatoes, tobacco and cotton.[1] Their only agricultural implements consist of digging-sticks of hard, heavy wood, and a kind of paddle-like, wooden spades. A typical digging-stick is reproduced in fig. 27.

Fig. 121. Cord on which fish are strung by means of a large needle of hard, heavy wood. This kind of carrying-gear is very common among the Choroti. The specimen here reproduced originates, however, from the Toba (neighbours of the Choroti). Gran Chaco, Bolivia. E:s. Riksm. 03. 3. 766.

It is probable that the Choroti originally had no other domestic animals than dogs, and the only tame animals I personally saw among this tribe were dogs and fowls. Those of the Choroti Indians who are living in the neighbourhood of the Pilcomayo possess, beside the animals mentioned, also sheep, goats, cattle, horses and cats. Sheep-rearing has now come to be of great importance to the Indians, who use the wool as material for mantles, fillets, etc.

As mentioned, the Choroti are a nomadic people. Their changes of location may be due to various circumstances. When pasture is exhausted in one place, they must look about for another; they move on to more profitable fishing-waters, or wander into regions that are rich in game and wild, edible plants. But there may also be other, and quite different, reasons for the Choroti's leaving their old abodes. In epidemics, when deaths are plentiful, it happens that the Choroti abandon their villages, and this they may also occasionally do if they are apprehensive of visits from whites (see pp. 47 and 48). In a first-rate monograph, Dr. Ragnar Numelin has exhaustively analyzed the causes governing the nomadic instinct in primitive peoples. As re-

[1] Nordenskiöld (11), p. 29.

1: Rosen E-5 (1901-1902) 1924 SK6 Choroti SK6

286
415

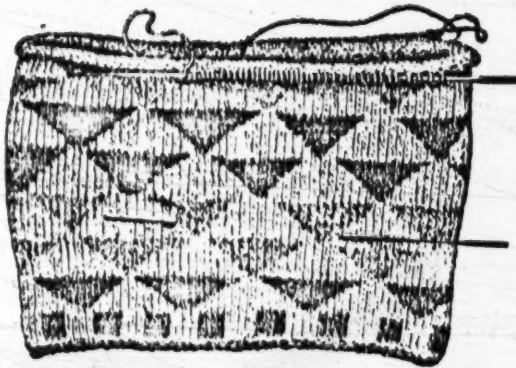

Fig. 141. Bag (unfinished), knitted of woollen yarn, with two cactus spines used as knitting needles. The pattern consists of red, brown and grey triangles and squares on a greyish white ground. Choroti. Gran Chaco, Bolivia. 1/3. Riksm. 03. 3. 143.

Fig. 142. Distaff, with wooden spindle and a spherical whorl consisting of the hard shell of a fruit. Left-spun cotton yarn is wound on the spindle, near its middle. Choroti. Gran Chaco, Bolivia. 1/3. Riksm. 10. 3. 51.

Fig. 143. Distaff, with wooden spindle, and a plano-convex whorl of bone. Choroti. Gran Chaco, Bolivia. 1/3. Riksm. 03. 3. 140.

triangles and squares on greyish-white ground. It is probable that the Choroti have learnt the art of knitting through having been in contact with more cultured tribes.

283
[231]

From their herds of sheep the Choroti obtain all the wool they need for manufacturing mantles, loin cloths, ponchos, fillets, bags, etc. Wool, as well as cotton, is spun with distaffs of the Bakairi type[1] (figs. 142 and 143). The spindles of the distaffs are of wood, with a small knob at the top end for fixing the wool. The spindle is always thinnest at the upper end, and increases in thickness downwards, attaining its greatest thickness not far from its bottom end. The spindle whorls consist of various materials, such as fruit rinds, bone, earthenware, etc. I have even obtained a Choroti distaff with a stone whorl (Riksm. 10. 3. 50), although this is a material which is extremely rare on the

[1] For South American spinning implements and their classification see Frodin and Nordenskiöld (1). 10[3]. — *v. Rosen.* II.

2: Nordenskiöld E-5 (1908-1909)1919
SK6 Choroti SK6
Ashluslay SK5

X.

Domestic Animals and Objects connected with them.

A C 231

The Choroti and the Ashluslay keep dogs, horses, cows, sheep, goats, fowls and cats. Of these the *dog* is the only native domestic animal. The dog is very widely distributed in America. In many cases it is difficult to decide to what extent he has spread beyond his original domain in post-Columbian times. I do not know whether the Chaco dog has been crossed with dogs of European breeds, but in any case he has a very characteristic appearance, and is worth studying by a specialist.

We know that the Indians of the Argentine pampas and of the Chaco Austral became real equestrians soon after the Discovery of America. Their whole life was changed and adopted to the horse.

A C [481 492]

The Ashluslay and some of the Choroti also have horses, and *breed horses*. But they are not equestrians, and usually go on foot. Owing to the introduction of horses, they have adopted this and the other accessory to a horseman's equipment, among other things, curious *spurs* of forked wood. (Fig. 11).

The Ashluslay Indians have numerous cows and sheep, and a smaller number of goats. Among the Choroti we find sheep and goats, and few cows. When the cows are killed, their flesh is used; but this may be said to happen rarely.

2: Nordenskiöld E-5 (1908-1909) 1919
SK6 Choroti SK6
Ashluslay SK5

The wool of the sheep is turned to account. Sheep and goats are sometimes killed.

Cow horns are used as tinder-boxes, spoons and occasionally trumpets.

Little enclosures are sometimes built for the sheep and goats.

Goat horns are also turned into spoons.

Fig. 11. Wooden Spur.
Ashluslay. G. M. (A. 107) 1/2.

Mataco SI7
Choroti SK6

M /320 cont./

771 They have a vague idea of superior beings, whom they fear
776 without worshiping them; the cleverest one becomes the sorcerer
756 and exploits the poverty of his companions, especially today when
648 they are earning money from the whites, to whom they lend im-
464 portant services.

M They frequently move from the region that they occupy to
169 the Argentine Republic; they work, dress, learn some Spanish
177 and a slight smattering of civilization, and return to their lands to live as before.

Choroti

Ci
131 The zone located southeast of Toba territory is occupied
197 by the Choroti Indians, who have their own language. They occupy the geographic degree 22° 30' latitude and 64° 10' longitude, on the left bank of the Pilcomayo River.

Ci They are quite numerous and peaceful, and they are not
181 treacherous like their neighbors, the Toba. Nevertheless, they
648 inspire respect in all the neighboring tribes; if a mission were to be established at said degree, the conquest of all the Bolivian territory /321/ up to 24° would be accomplished without the need of so many small forts, which are such a great expense to the Nation and which do not create centers of trade and civilization.

Ci Father Gianelli in years past visited the Choroti Indians,
797 was received with displays of affection and appreciation, and
177 found among them good inclinations toward becoming civilized, but at that time the harvest was too much for so few evangelical workers.

Ci The Choroti are not so lazy and savage as the other tribes;
181 they devote themselves to the cultivation of a few seeds and to
241 the raising of cattle, although on a small scale. They are also
231 hunters, however, and when they occupy the banks of the
224 Pilcomayo, they take advantage of the fruits the river brings them, especially in the great floods.

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7
Toba SI/2
Choroti SK6

M T C 224 C [262]

rarely succeed in killing a tapir, a deer, or a wild pig. Besides, the deer is an animal of which the Choroti have a superstitious fear, and its flesh is never eaten by them; when they kill one, they only keep the hoofs, which are used as magical rattles, the leg-bones, of which instruments used for ceremonial blood-letting are made, and the skin which is used for different purposes. Of birds, as I have stated before, the ostrich is especially appreciated both on account of its flesh and its plumes, which play a great role as personal ornaments and to which magical power is ascribed. In hunting the ostrich the Choroti, like other Chaco tribes, avail themselves of the trick of binding palm leaves together and placing them on the head and shoulders so as to resemble a young tree. Disguised in this way, the Indians generally succeed in getting within easy range of the shy bird, and are thus able to bring it down with their arrows. Another trick of which the Indians often make use in hunting is that of imitating the cry of certan animals and birds by means of round wooden whistles, particularly invented for this purpose. With the same whistles, which are supposed to possess magic power, they also imitate the supposed whistling sound of the spirits, which are thereby frightened away.

T 224

The Tobas are much more skilled hunters than the Choroti and the Mataco, and, at least in Bolivia, the country inhabited by these Indians is comparatively rich in game. Thus tapirs, deer, and wild pigs, of which latter there are two varieties, are frequent in the forests, and the Tobas hunt them eagerly, using bows and arrows as well as lances as weapons. All Indians, and particularly the Tobas, are expert in stalking ainmals; the latter are thereby aided by their dogs which are specially trained for the hunting of the wild pig. Even the jaguar and the puma are hunted by the Tobas with dogs.

M T C 231

Of domestic animals the Chaco Indians keep dogs, sheep and goats as well as fowls. [1] Horses were long ago introduced among the Tobas who

[1] Nordenskiöld, when treating of the domestic animals of the Bolivian Indians in his *Ethnography of South America seen from Mojos in Bolivia*, p. 114, amongst other things mentions that in Mojos only the civilized Indians keep cattle, which have been introduced by the whites, and adds the following erroneous statements as regards the Chaco Indians: »In the Chaco, on the other hand, *even the independent Indians have cattle* which play an important part for them. *The Indians keep no sheep or goats*». I wish to point out that neither the Tobas nor the Choroti, nor the Mataco on the Pilcomayo keep cattle. On the other hand, sheep and goats are kept by *all* Pilcomayo tribes and, as far as I know, by all other Chaco Indians, except perhaps some savage tribes in the interior of the unknown Chaco.

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7
Toba SI 12
Choroti SK 6

soon became skilled riders, but among the other Pilcomayo tribes they are rare. Before the Chaco Indian became acquainted with the white man, the dog was the only domestic animal known to him. These half-starved, fierce, and treacherous dogs are a real nuisance in the Mataco and the Choroti villages to the white traveller who has to stay among the Indians, because in their hunger they are always on the alert to rob him of edible things, among which they include not only his provisions, but also his saddlegear, boots, and other leather goods. Although the Mataco and the Choroti treat their numerous dogs badly and evidently have little use for them even as watches, yet in a way they regard them as members of the tribe. They never kill a dog, however old and wretched it may be, and when it dies they lament over it just as they lament over a fellow-tribesman. This curious practice is due to superstitious reasons, fear of the spirit of the dog. Like many other South American Indians, the natives of the Chaco believe that the souls of their dead tribesmen may reincarnate themselves in the dogs.

Only the Tobas, who are culturally superior to the rest of the Pilcomayo tribes, feed their dogs properly and have real use for them both in hunting and as watchdogs. But even these dogs are of uncertain breed and by nature so savage that for my own part I failed in my attempts to train them according to European methods.

These general remarks on the material culture of the Pilcomayo tribes may suffice as a basis for the following description of their social customs and their intellectual culture. I shall repeatedly have occasion to touch upon the ergology of the Indians in describing their magical ornaments and amulets, as well as various objects used at religious ceremonies.

2: Karsten E-5 (1911-1913)1932 SI7 Mataco SI7
Toba SI2
Choroti SK6

eating of fish at the beginning of the wet season is likely to cause malarial fever. What is particularly dangerous in the fish, as the Indians told me, is the stomach; an evil spirit may hide in it. Therefore a person must abstain from eating this kind of food when he or she is in a delicate condition and exposed to the attacks of supernatural enemies. After a death it is the death-demon that is believed to have possibly taken up its abode in the stomach of the fish. In general, the rules of diet, both in regard to fish and in regard to other kinds of food, are always more strict for the women than for the men, and this is naturally due to the belief that the former have by nature less power of resistance against evil spirits than the latter.

Several other food restrictions exist among the Chaco tribes, and most of them are due to superstitious ideas of one kind or another. Just as the Choroti shun the meat of the deer, so I found among the Toba men an aversion to the meat of the wild pig, although this is a very tasty food. This may possibly be due to the idea that the wild pig is a »female» animal, as is also the armadillo. At any rate the Tobas have the belief that the souls of women particularly reincarnate themselves in the wild pig. All Chaco Indians likewise have an aversion to drinking the blood or milk of animals and eating the eggs of hens and of other birds. The Indians could give me no explanation as to this superstition, and it is possible that the original reasons for it are now forgotten. It is, however, highly probable that they shun blood and milk because they believe that the spirit or soul of the animal is in them. This is at any rate quite obvious with regard to blood, which plays an important part in native superstition. Thus among all tribes there appears a mysterious dread of shedding the blood of domestic animals. The Choroti for instance, when they have to slaughter a sheep or goat, never kill the animal by cutting its throat or shedding its blood in some other way, but always, according to old observance, by strangulation. The custom is professedly observed for fear of coming in contact with the blood of the animal. — For a similar reason, I believe, the Indians have originally abstained from eating eggs. The egg is the embryo of the bird, and in the embryo or foetus of an animal, according to primitive belief, its spirit has its abode in the same way as in its blood or milk. It is interesting in this connection to note what Mr. Grubb says of the analogous ideas of the Lenguas. »Milk, whether of the cow, goat, sheep, or mare, is never drunk. The older people seem to consider it unfit for them, and children are forbidden it because it is supposed that the milk upon which they